



Department of  
Toxic Substances  
Control

*Preventing  
environmental  
damage from  
hazardous waste,  
and restoring  
contaminated  
sites for all  
Californians.*



State of California



California  
Environmental  
Protection Agency

Fact Sheet, September 2006

## Munitions Investigation and Treatment at the former Lockheed Martin Potrero Creek Site

Recently, small munitions were found at the former Lockheed Martin Potrero Creek Site south of Beaumont, California. The 20 millimeter (mm) practice ammunition (shown in photo below) is presumed to have been left over from historic ballistics testing performed at the site. The discovery has led to a search for other munitions across several areas of the site.

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), a department within the California Environmental Protection Agency, is the lead agency overseeing the investigation and removal, which is being conducted by Lockheed Martin. DTSC's goal is to safeguard the public health and protect the environment.

This fact sheet describes where the munitions came from, what will be done to find and safely dispose of them, and what areas of the site are off limits to the public until they have been safely evaluated.



## Site History

The 9,100 acre site is located at the southern end of Highland Springs Road. In late 2003, most of the site, also known as Lockheed Martin Beaumont Site 1, was sold to the State of California. It is now managed by the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG). DFG uses the property as a wildlife conservation area with some public recreation and small game hunting once cleanup is completed.

## Munitions came from past ballistics testing

From 1960 until 1974, Lockheed Martin used the facility for solid rocket motor propellant mixing, testing, and burning, as well as ballistics testing. Most munitions used on the site were practice rounds that did not contain high explosives. Aerojet and General Dynamics also leased areas of the site for ballistics testing which continued through 1984.

## Reason for the current investigation

Record rainfall in 2005 caused damage at several creek crossings along the site roadways. During repair of a stream crossing in the eastern portion of the site, workers found two small clusters of 20mm linked ammunition rounds. The Riverside County Sheriff's Department Hazardous Device Team was called. Officers were uncertain if the 20mm rounds contained an explosive charge, so the cartridges were destroyed in place.

With DTSC's oversight, Lockheed Martin has begun an investigation on parts of the site that might contain munitions. This investigation will take approximately 12 months.

## Explosive munitions will be detonated in place

The safest method of dealing with explosive munitions at this site is for explosives experts to blow them up in place. This method is much safer than moving the munitions that can explode while being handled. There will likely be no more than 50 items that will need to be blown up in place.

When suspected explosive munitions or other explosives are found, workers will establish a safe zone, secure the area, and contact the Riverside County Sheriff's Hazardous Device Team. The Hazardous Device Team will inspect each item and determine the safest method of treatment. To prevent fires, water will be applied to the area before treating the munitions.

## Warning signs are posted

Warning signs are posted at 500 foot intervals along the boundary and every 250 feet along established approved roadways. Only the established approved roads will be safe for public use in the posted areas. It is not be safe to leave the established approved road in these restricted areas.

## No significant impact on wildlife or the community

The DTSC has prepared a draft "Notice of Exemption" (NOE) as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The NOE is our finding that the munitions destruction/-treatment will not have a significant impact on human health or the environment. DFG and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will review the work plan to ensure the removal will not harm plants or wildlife. There is no impact to the surrounding community.

## **KEEP OUT OF THE RESTRICTED AREAS**

**Due to the potential danger, specific areas of the site have been posted with warning signs to keep the public out of the areas of concern until the site has been evaluated. These areas are not fenced off.**

***Do not enter these restricted areas. The munitions are unstable and can explode if you touch them, move them, or disturb them in any way.***

## **Where to find documents**

The investigation work plan and NOE, as well as site project documents are available for public review at the following locations:

### **Beaumont Public Library**

125 E. 8th Street  
Beaumont, CA 92223  
Phone: (951) 845-1357  
Fax: (951) 845-6217

### **Lockheed Martin Website**

<http://www.lockheedmartin.com>

About Us  
Energy, Environmental Health & Safety  
Providing Community Solutions

### **DTSC Regional Records Office**

5796 Corporate Avenue  
Cypress, CA 90630  
Phone: (714) 484-5337  
Contact: Julie Johnson (714) 484-5337  
Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

## **Who to contact for more information**

For more information about the munitions removal, please contact:

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***INSIDE:*** Munitions removal scheduled to begin at the Former Lockheed Martin Site